

Monday, 13 November 2023

SALVOS TOY DRIVE APPEAL LAUNCHED FOR 2023

Donations can be made at Newcastle Permanent branches

It's the time of year when we open up our hearts, and The Salvation Army and NGM Group are asking locals to help spread joy by donating a gift to the Salvos annual Christmas Toy Drive Appeal.

Now in its 35th year in partnership with Newcastle Permanent, the 2023 Toy Drive will assist families across New South Wales.

Last year some 6000 gifts were donated at Newcastle Permanent branches across regional NSW, and Salvation Army Public Relations and Community Engagement Manager Rod Dibley said there is an expectation there will be even more need in the community this year.

"From January to August of this year, our Doorways Emergency Relief services and Mission and Communities recorded a 15% increase in the number of people assisted, as well as a 19% increase in sessions of care provided to people in need compared to the same time last year, so we are expecting to see a similar trend this Christmas," said Mr Dibley.

"In fact, we are certain that there will be people reaching out for help this Christmas from the Salvos who we have never seen before.

"More and more people are struggling with the basics, so the thought of having to buy presents for children and loved ones is very overwhelming and actually impossible for some.

"A little bit of generosity from those that are able goes a long way, and I know with community support we'll be able to put some smiles on faces on Christmas Day."

No one knows this better than Caroline, a single parent of three who had been receiving assistance from food pantries in her community. She received Christmas Cheer from 2019 to 2022 after a friend suggested she contact the Salvos.

"I remember the love, and kindness, and total lack of judgement that I received," said Caroline.

"I'm still blown away by the generosity of people.

"Still to this day I think back and want to cry."

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Inspired by her own experience, Caroline has now joined the Salvation Army to pay that kindness forward.

“It’s an enormous privilege to meet people on what could be their worst day, and we have an enormous opportunity to help and be kind,” she said.

“People can be fragile and vulnerable, and we all have a lot of capacity to bring love and hope.

“We may be the glimmer on their horizon.”

NGM Group Chief Customer and Digital Innovation Officer, James Cudmore, said that the appeal was an important tradition for Newcastle Permanent.

“Each year we are proud to be able to support the Salvos’ Christmas Toy Drive Appeal,” said Mr Cudmore.

“We know that the Salvos help thousands of people have a merry Christmas, and it’s an honour to be able to contribute.”

Donations can be made at any Newcastle Permanent branch until Friday 15 December. Gifts should be new and unwrapped and are accepted for all ages, including teenagers.

“Any and all donations are hugely appreciated,” said Mr Dibley.

“If you want to donate but are short of ideas, you can never go wrong with the classics – toys, clothing, books, and games – but something for older kids and teenagers are always welcome, such as vouchers, sporting equipment, beauty products and fashion accessories.”

ABOUT NEWCASTLE PERMANENT

Established in 1903, Newcastle Permanent is committed to serving our customers and their communities by providing trusted banking through home loans, deposits, everyday accounts, more than 40 branches, and a broad ATM network. Proudly customer-owned, Newcastle Permanent provides millions of dollars each year in community grants, support and sponsorship.